Issue 196 2 December 1995

CBW

Coach and Bus Week

The PSV industry's news weekly

SIMPLY THE BEST

Clarkes steals the show

CAMBRIDGE CONVERTS

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HIGH QUALITY LOW MILEAGE COACHES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1994 L EOS90 Integral, 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF WS3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF KS3000 Easishift Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Int Retarder Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF HS2700 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF MB230LT Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF KS3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet

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1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1990 G DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1990 G DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH,' 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF DHTD Duple 320SL, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

HIGH QUALITY USED COACHES

1990 G VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1990 G DAF DHTD Duple 320, 57R
1988 F SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH, 49R/Toilet
1987 D DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee H, 49R/Toilet
1987 D DAF MB230LB Duple 340, 53R
1987 D SCANIA K112 Jonckheere, 51R/T
1986 C DAF MB200FL Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1986 PP VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 52R

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TOYOTA OPTIMO

1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M
49/53 recliners, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with roller blinds, wired TV/video, finished white.
M.O.T. 1996

1993 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 350 12M
53 recliners, red/black stripe moquette, rear continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, power entrance door, finished white/orange.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1991 (AUGUST) LEYLAND SWIFT REEVE BURGESS HARRIER
37 seats, brown/orange moquette, power entrance door, finished white/beige/rose.
M.O.T. JULY 1996

1990 DAF SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE-DH 12M
51/53 recliners, re-trimmed brown graffiti moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted windows, curtains, courier seat, provision for driver's berth, water boiler, wired TV/video, low driving position, finished cream/brown.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

1990 TOYOTA CAETANO OPTIMO
21 seats, brown/fawn moquette, courier seat, curtains, power entrance door, finished white/orange/brown.
M.O.T. APRIL 1996

1989 (October) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M
51 recliners, beige/brown/orange moquette, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, water boiler, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, wired TV/video, finished white/green/red.
M.O.T. MARCH 1996

NEW for '96
VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE
VOLVO B9M VAN HOOL ALIZEE
BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.330
BOVA FUTURA FLD 12.270
BOVA FUTURA FLC 12.275
Discuss your requirements now!

1989 (August) LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 320 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows, pull-down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet o/s rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, re-trimmed in grey/red moquette, courier seat, tinted side windows, curtains, drinks machine, TELMA retarder, power operated door, finished white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1996

1985 (August) VAN HOOL ALICRON INTEGRAL 12M
49/53 recliners, Autumn tint moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, TELMA retarder, MAN power, wired TV/video, finished white.
M.O.T. JUNE 1996

1985 DAF DKVL DUPLE CARIBBEAN II 12M
49 recliners, grey/red moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental door, driver's sleeping berth, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, drinks machine, wired TV/video, finished grey/red/orange/yellow.
M.O.T. JUNE 1996

1983 (September) BOVA EUROPA II INTEGRAL 12M
49 seats, brown striped moquette, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, power entrance door, wired TV/video, finished white/red/blue.
M.O.T. APRIL 1996

1983 BOVA EUROPA II INTEGRAL 12M
49/53 seats, brown moquette, centre demountable toilet, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, Webasto, wired TV/video, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, finished white/blue.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1983 BOVA EUROPA II INTEGRAL 12M
53 seats, brown stripe moquette, courier seat, rear continental door, power entrance door, finished white/red/maroon.
M.O.T. 1996

1983 DAF DKFL CAETANO ALPHA-GT 12M
53 recliners, brown stripe moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, power entrance door, finished white/blue/beige.
M.O.T. JULY 1996

1981 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON SUPREME 12M
57 seats, grey/red moquette, Bristol Dome, finished white/blue.
M.O.T. OCTOBER 1996

1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME IV EXPRESS 11M
48 seats, Autumn tint moquette, Bristol Dome, power entrance doors, semi-automatic gearbox, finished yellow/white.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1996

Issue 196 2 December 1995

CBW
Coach and Bus Week

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CONGRATULATIONS! It was a pleasure and a privilege to be part of an outstanding coach industry event last weekend. The second Coach Industry Awards was a big hit and we are proud of the industry which made it such a tremendous success.

Within minutes of the *CBW* team arriving back in Peterborough our new direct-dial phone lines have been hot with spontaneous callers anxious to add their appreciation for our efforts to boost the image and morale of the coach industry. Bill Clarke put it in a nutshell after he collected the top coach operator award with his wife, Tania: "The industry needed something like this 10 years ago."

Inevitably the winners make the headline news but do not forget that to be among the finalists is an accolade in itself and a supreme achievement. The fact that competition for each award category is so intense reflects on the professionalism and integrity of the coach industry. But Bill Clarke is in no doubt that "competition for next year is going to be even stronger."

We are already actively planning the 1996 Awards event, which promises to be even better.

Don't forget that it all started as a wild dream just over two years ago. From there the idea was floated at the Coach Tourism Council's annual charity ball. The response and support was so encouraging that we pushed ahead full of confidence but acutely aware that it was going to be an uphill struggle.

However, the reaction to the first Awards outstripped our expectations. The Queens Hotel in Leeds was filled to its 400-seat capacity. Clearly we had identified a need and the Coach Industry Awards was here to stay.

From Leeds we went bigger and better and last weekend, the awards roadshow invaded the Metropole Hotel adjacent to the NEC. There was a sound and visual experience to match the occasion, giving the 600 guests a night to match their expectations.

Remembering that the house-full signs went up almost two months before this year's event, there is every reason to expect the Coach Industry Awards to grow with the industry. See you there next year.

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events

5 December: CIT South Eastern Section conference, Kent Transport through the Millennium, Ashford International Hotel, Ashford Kent. Details from Gerald Uzzell, tel 01227 366322

12 December: The Future for Light Rapid Transit Systems, one-day conference by the CIT and The Waterfront Conference Company. Details from Claire Dexter, tel 0171 730 0410, fax 0171 730 0460

14 December: Buses Worldwide, South Africa in 1977, Fred Tallent Hall, Euston, NW1. Details from Ian Johnston, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants GU13 9HE

12-21 January, 1996: Fourteenth Geneva International Commercial Vehicle show, Palexpo, Geneva, Switzerland. Details from International Commercial Vehicle show Secretariat, PO Box 112, 1218 Grand-Saconnex (Switzerland), tel +41 22 761 11 11, fax +41 22 798 01 00

20 March 1996: CIT's Frederick Speight Memorial Lecture by Moir Lockhead, chief executive of FirstBus, Moving People into the New Millennium. Details from Jeff English on 01603 457348

27&28 March: British Travel Trade Fair, NEC.

15-18 April 1996: Policies Not Politics, CPT Scottish Conference, Turnbury, Ayreshire. Contact Peter Thompson on 0141 6394984.

15-17 May: Institute of Road Transport Engineers, IRTE '96, Telford Exhibition Centre, Telford. Contact IRTE on 0171 630 1111, fax 0171 630 6677.

6 June: Bus and Coach Wales Rally, Barry Island, South Glamorgan. Contact Cardiff Transport Preservation Group, 1 Tyn-y-Cae Grove, Cardiff CF4 6DB.

▼ Coach

Biss Bros gets new HQ, manager and livery...

by Mike Morgan

IT'S all change at Biss Brothers Coaches, the Lynton Travel Group coaching arm, which has a new manager, new livery and a change of home.

This month the Essex-based company moves from Spellbrook to Stansted Airport where it will operate alongside its sister company, Airport Coaches, under the control of general manager Andy Gibbs, 32, who is assisted by Neil Wilson.

Lynton director, Graham Willett, told *CBW* that Mr Gibbs was recruited from Cambridge Coach Services and has taken over from Bill Varney, 74, who has retired after being associated with the company for many years.

Biss has swapped its long-standing white and sky blue livery for a Best Impressions inspired scheme introducing a dark shade of blue and bolder use of company name. And is hoping to rekindle the Biss pioneering spirit with a return to European tours.

Mr Willett said: "A feature of next year's operations will be an extended tours programme encompassing the UK and the Continent."

Lynton bought 18-vehicle Biss 18 months ago and, in the wake of the sale of its bus operations in Essex and Manchester, has remarketed its Airport fleet, building it up to 12 coaches performing on work ranging from a regular contract with the Joe Loss Orchestra to Stansted airside movements. George Evans is operations manager at the airport.

New Best Impressions livery with darker blue and bolder lettering

▼ Coach

Union urges action over Euro crashes

INTERNATIONAL action has been urged by the Transport and General Workers Union over the "disturbing" level of coach crashes in Europe involving UK holidaymakers.

After claiming that 138 UK holidaymakers were killed on European roads between 1989 and 1993, the T&G's Scottish bus workers' annual conference in Glasgow has called on European politicians to set up a committee to look into driver schedules and vehicle age. The union says any contraveners of the rules should be prosecuted.

▼ Bus

Stagecoach victim of bias — Souter

STAGECOACH claims it has been the victim of bias.

Executive chairman Brian Souter talked frankly about OFT and MMC investigations in a Dundee newspaper interview, arguing that there are contradictions in the reports.

"We're only asking to be treated the same as other industries," said Mr Souter. "But we cannot get the ground rules established. What we're concerned about just now is that we've had the same chairman on the last five inquiries, and we feel he has a bias against us."

Direct dial numbers installed at CBW

READERS and contributors whose first contact with *Coach and Bus Week* has always been the dulcet tones of our silky-smooth receptionist Sheila Banks will be getting withdrawal symptoms from this week.

For all *CBW* staffers are now available direct, via a personal number. From now on, please use ONLY the numbers on the right to contact *CBW* staff.

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The switchboard number is 01733 467000.

▼ Bus

'Better public transport - less road spending'

TRANSPORT secretary Sir George Young says the future is better public transport and less spending on roads.

Speaking at the Observer/Town and Country Planning Association Conference, Sir George said there were no easy solutions but the climate of public opinion was changing:

The Government had commissioned research to find out what people would support to reduce car travel, the results of which should be out early next year.

"It is common ground that we will need to make more and better use of public transport in the future," Sir George continued.

"The department's bus working group should result in some worthwhile and practical measures."

▼ Coach

Is Moseley's to re-open?

As Dunn leaves DSB speculation grows

by Mark Williams

THE boards had been taken off the windows at Moseley's Shepshed unit and it housed a solitary coach last weekend... but Alf Moseley remains tight-lipped over the site's future.

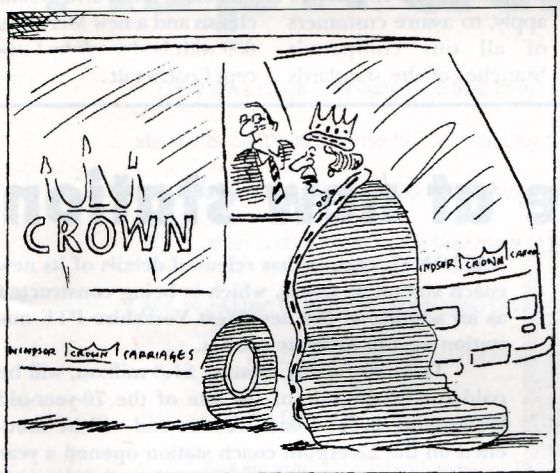
Speculation that the Loughborough-based wing of the Moseley Group is to re-open for coach sales has still not been confirmed (*CBW*, 25 November).

At nearby DSB Sales, the sudden departure of director John Dunn from the business and rumours that Marco Polo and Dennis - with whom DSB has done a lot of its business - were being offered a new deal by Moseley remain speculation.

"There has been all sorts of trauma here," Director Mrs Ann Prime told *Coach and Bus Week*. "DSB Sales is now under my directorship, with Alan Middleton in a general managerial role. Other than that, it's business as usual."

DSB Sales: it's business as usual, says director Ann Prime

Moseley's Shepshed site: is it ready for new business?



"TO THE CASTLE MY GOOD MAN AND DON'T SPARE THE HORSEMAN"

▼ Coach

Shuttle now has commercial route

HORSEMAN Coaches of Reading has had the luxury Windsor Crown Carriages shuttle service it runs for the local borough extended with a commercial route.

The Courtesy Shuttle Service has been running since 1988, with council sponsorship from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead but, to reduce subsidy and simultaneously extend the service, it now incorporates a Townlink luxury bus service.

Run entirely with two re-liveried Optimos, the twin services dovetail peak shuttles, with off-peak luxury town services taking in Eton, Datchet, Old Windsor and Dedworth, some of which is hail-and-ride.

"The courtesy shuttle, which largely carries people to work, has been made popular by the two, regular drivers," said Norman Fryer-Saxby, Horseman's general manager. "The borough's support has been excellent. It has even provided mobile radios for the drivers as a security measure, and this has paid off when our drivers have used them to report suspicious activity in the car parks."

The new Townlink service will be operated hourly on weekdays off peak, with single fares between 70p and £1.60, and the 20-minute courtesy service at peak times and Saturdays.

CBW

INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ●●● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ●●●

News
Bus operators miss out in first round of BR sell-off; White closes HO in WMT pay review; bus decline halted in West Midlands; Trent rebranding wins customers; London to get long-term transport strategy; David Humphrey hits out at OFT; Traction cuts back in Sheffield fare war; three rapid transit options for Liverpool; guided trolley-buses in Doncaster?

Inside Parliament
Labour MPs probe Government on regulation and municipal bus sales.

Media Digest
Sir George Young on the Superbus; Labour targets the car; Great Western service pledge... as Resurgence director linked to failed business; SeaCo pulls out of BR bidding; Crossrail sacrificed to BR sell-off?

Analysis
High margins key to fleet renewal at thriving Trent. Results for the Wellgrade Group of Derby are still not sufficient to provide for vehicle replacements, says managing director Brian King, despite the group's best ever results.

● **To make sure of your own copy of *Transit*, delivered first class every other Wednesday, fill in the subscription order form on page 47. You don't know what you've been missing.**

In brief

Dales leaflet

A NEW leaflet offers coach drivers details of suitable roads and coach parks for touring the Yorkshire Dales. Maps of the area and the town parking areas, toilets and tourist information offices, addresses and phone numbers of tourist offices, plus general information are included in the Coach Driver's Guide to the Yorkshire Dales, free from Yorkshire Dales National Park, on 01756 752748.

■ **Tour news pages 18&19**

Belts installed

BARKING and Dagenham Borough Council has installed seatbelts on its eight school coaches. Three-point belts are fitted to most seats but side-facing seats and some rear seats have full harnesses. The belts were made and installed by NMI of London.

CIT conference

THAT investment in public transport is being hampered by lack of a clear Government transport strategy was highlighted at a two-day conference run by the Chartered Institute of Transport. A broad consensus emerged during the conference — Transport, the National Debate. The final presentation of the conference, by Transport Secretary Sir George Young, acknowledged the emergence of common themes.

ROMANSE

HAMPSHIRE County Council's ROMANSE computer-driven transport integration system is one of 10 finalists for the 1995 British Computer Society Award. The integration system - which links to existing communications technology - collects, collates and disseminates traffic information.

▼ Coach

Quality makes an Impact

'ISO 9002 will give customers of all our branches assurance of quality'

IMPACT Coaches of Brentford is one of the first sole-trader coach operators to obtain the prestigious trading standard ISO 9002.

Managing director Tony Hill decided that obtaining the standard should be the next step for a growing coach operator and driving school. Impact Coaches has grown from one minibus in 1974 to a mixed fleet of 34 vehicles today, with a staff of 40. As well as running coaches on private hire and its own UK-based excursion programme, the company also has an accident repair arm, including a paint shop, and a 60-car driving school.

The ISO 9002 quality standard was achieved without hiring external and expensive consultants and covers all aspects of the business.

"The standard was obtained by having three internal audits per year, which are then thoroughly checked by the governing body - Quality Management Services," Mr Hill told *Coach and Bus Week*.

"This procedure is carried out on a yearly basis to ensure the administration of the company is 100 per cent effective and could basically run itself in the absence of management.

Impact Coaches: first sole-trader to win coveted ISO 9002 award

by Lee Puffett

"We noticed from the engineering branch of the company that the ISO 9002 was required before any of our potential clients would trade with us due to their companies holding the standard. We decided it would benefit Impact to apply, to assure customers of all our company's branches of the standards we could provide."

Mr Hill confidently expects Impact to expand further with plans to run tours and excursions in Europe, using the Channel Tunnel, and has recently acquired a new Plaxton Excalibur on Volvo B10M chassis and a new Mercedes 609 with bodywork by Concept Coachcraft.

▼ Coach

Security and style at new station

Safe environment: Leeds £1.8m new coach station

NATIONAL Express has released details of its new coach station at Leeds, which is being constructed as an adjunct to the new West Yorkshire PTE bus station next to Kirkgate market.

The new facility, costing £1.8 million, will be paid for by the sale of the site of the 70-year-old Wellington Street coach station, and will be modelled on the Liverpool coach station opened a year ago. Construction work has started on the site, and it is expected to open in June 1996.

Nine, canopied departure bays will handle over 100 daily coach departures. NatEx expects to handle over 4,000 passengers per day at the new facility.

A 150-seat, heated, enclosed passenger waiting area will be the central feature of the facility, which will be designed for access by disabled users. Eight travel sales counters will include one with a speech amplification facility for those with hearing impairments.

"We aim to create a safe environment at the new coach station, with 24-hour security," said NatEx spokesman Stuart Render.

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▼ Coach and Bus

Alternative fuel tests in print

THE Department of Transport's Trials of Alternative Fuels in the UK lists a dozen bus companies which have trialled or are trying alternative fuels.

The booklet has sourced its information from newspapers - including *Coach and Bus Week* - and council press releases, offering skeletal information about the results each has achieved, where known.

LPG has been of interest to FirstBus, Guide Friday, London Pride and Stagecoach Midland Red South. CNG has attracted FirstBus, Ipswich Buses, Newbury Buses and Southampton Citybus (see lead story - right). Only Oxford Bus Company has tried all-electric buses, while hybrids have been tried by Portsmouth Transit and its parent, Transit Holdings. Biodiesel, made from seed oil, has been tried by Kentish Bus and Reading Buses.

Clean City Diesel is listed as being trialled only by Reading Buses, but Greenergy's low-emission fuel is now being examined by other bus companies.

● Copies of the booklet are available from The Department of Transport, Vehicle Standards and Engineering Division, Environment Branch, 2/04 Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. It is free.

▼ Bus

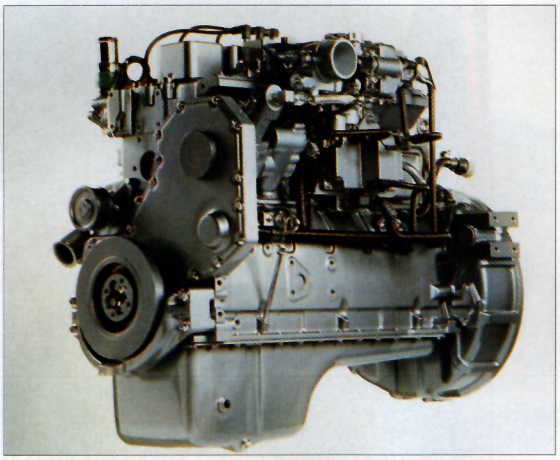
CNG incentive from British Gas

Operator to get own gas filling station free

by Mark Williams

SOUTHAMPTON Citybus is to get its own CNG filling station free from British Gas... but has signed up for 10 years and a further 10 CNG buses.

Citybus' plans include the conversion of six vehicles to CNG with help from Hampshire County Council and the Department of Transport, then the purpose-built CNG buses in March with the help of a European city transport project.



Purpose-built Cummins B-series CNG power

The result will be the biggest fleet of CNG buses in Britain which, together with the Newbury Buses project (*CBW*, 25 November) may help persuade operators to move to CNG.

British Gas already has 10 public CNG stations in the UK and hopes the addition of dedicated filling points will popularise the fuel.

CNG is said to reduce emissions overall by 78 per cent, but British Gas says its acceptance will depend on support from Government in the form of a duty reduction in the next Budget. British Gas itself will run 900 vehicles on CNG by the end of 1996.

Cambus traps get sooted up

THE first compressed natural gas (CNG) powered Optare MetroRiders have been bought by Cambus of Cambridge.

Power for the two vehicles, which cost around £80,000 each, is provided by a factory-built Cummins B series engine. The vehicles will go into service in June next year on a Cambridge County Council supported service, which provides shoppers with a continuous and free link between Cambridge town centre and the outlying Grafton centre.

The gas-powered MetroRiders will replace the current diesel MetroRiders, which are fitted with catalytic converters and particulate traps. According to Cambus managing director, John Steel, they have not been totally successful: "They've sooted up. The problem is not really the equipment (Eminox exhausts and Johnson Mathey converters and traps), more the service. The traps don't get hot enough in city centre operations to burn off the soot."

Cambus is currently negotiating with the Business Gas arm of British Gas to install a refuelling point free of charge. Talks are centred on a fast-fill point which offers comparable refuelling times to diesel.

"In Cambridge we have a very real need for low pollution vehicles, probably more so than in most cities," Mr Steel said. "Our investment and future work with British Gas will allow us to gather a wide range of operational and performance information which I hope will benefit the whole industry."

Among the environmental benefits of CNG compared with diesel are:

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● Reduction in carbon dioxide.

● Elimination of particulates.

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Diesel MetroRider will be replaced by first CNG-powered vehicles

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▼ Coach and Bus

Kortrijk bigger in 1996

KORTRIJK show attracted 19,138 visitors from 81 countries... and next year's show will be even bigger.

The 1996 event, on 17 to 22 October, will add a sixth hall to take the overall exhibition surface from 24,000 to 30,000 square metres. There will also be an additional, biennial show focusing on buses only – to be held 7 and 8 November at the same venue.

Show organisers are hoping an emphasis on accessible transport, mini and midibuses will attract exhibitors and operators next year to the additional show - named Bus 101 to celebrate the hundred and first anniversary of the first bus, and updated to Bus 103 in 1998.

First 15-metre dual-purpose two-door low-floor Transliner bus bought by large regional op

▼ Coach and Bus

Simplified low-floor Neoplan...

...and Caterpillar-engined Jetliner

Interior of the prototype 15-metre Transliner

By Bill Godwin

NEOPLAN has launched an innovative low-floor 15-metre Transliner bus and a Caterpillar-engined Jetliner as part of its 60th anniversary exhibition.

The German body-builder's 59-seat Transliner has a stunning interior, with swept-back grab-rails to enhance the feeling of space, and deep windows down to knee-height. The first, two-door example has been bought by a major bus company in northern Germany.

Neoplan is expecting the new bus to be bought by operators who cannot or will not opt for articulated, 18-metre low-floors. The floor design - dictated by operator preference - uses terraced seats to accomodate the engine and driveline rather than complex angle drives and portal axles.

As with most Neoplan vehicles, the Transliner uses a Mercedes-Benz engine, but Neoplan has now demonstrated its ability to fit other power units with the trial of the Jetliner for customer Ganserer Reisen.

The operator's parent group has extensive experience of Cat and, with the support of Germany's biggest Cat dealer - Zeppelin Baumaschinen - got a type 3176 DI-TA 380PS, six-cylinder Cat and Allison auto transmission into the engine bay.

The engine is the same type as used in Cat-owned Foden trucks.

Neoplan Jetliner: Germany's first Caterpillar-engined coach

New low-floor versions of Transliner include 12-metre

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Up front, there's an anti-submarine driver's seat, adjustable for height and rake. The gearchange is dashboard mounted at the driver's fingertips. And a buzzer will sound should you accidentally drive off without firmly closing either the saloon side or rear doors.

Mind you, driving off *is* a pleasure. Under the bonnet lies the smooth responsive power of an acclaimed Peugeot diesel engine, from either 1.9 or 2.5 litres (or 2.0 litre petrol). And ride and handling are quite exemplary – as befits a Peugeot.

Whilst safety is paramount, comfort, too, is essential.

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▼ Obituary

Eric Plaxton dies at 75

Quiet man of coachbuilding last surviving member of family

Eric Plaxton: unassuming

By Mark Williams

ERIC Plaxton has left his life as he lived it — in a low-key funeral which befitted his reputation as the quiet man of the coach-building family.

Mr Plaxton, 75, died in hospital following a massive heart attack two weeks ago. He was the last surviving member of the Plaxton family and the ceremony at St Mary's Church was attended by only a few of his closest friends.

Mr Plaxton had lived all his life in Scarborough, where his father, Frederick, founded what became Britain's last remaining coach-building business.

Eric Plaxton was not a natural leader, though his father was.

Plaxton's was a building firm in 1906 when Frederick set it up, building many of the area's schools but, between the wars, began car body building. The first purpose-built Plaxton coach rolled off the line in the late 1920s.

Eric Plaxton joined the family firm from school in 1937 and became its chairman in 1957. By 1961, he was joint managing director, and a boom followed, led chiefly by Mr Plaxton's senior staff. At its peak, Plaxton sold 1,433 vehicles in a year, most of which were coaches. It was said another coach left the factory every 90 minutes.

Eric Plaxton became chairman and chief executive of the group in 1974 and his father passed away shortly afterwards.

However, the boom years were ending and Plaxton was the subject of a reverse takeover from Kirkby in 1987. Eric Plaxton had a soft spot for the original company, Plaxton Building Services, and bought it for himself. He ran it as chairman until 1995, when it went into receivership, a victim of the building recession.

Mr Plaxton retained a significant shareholding in the publicly-owned group which, having acquired Henlys, took its name in the early 1990s. He had progessively sold his shareholding in latter years. One of his closest friends was his sales director, John Birley. Mr Birley had visited him in hospital, where he was being treated for angina, shortly before he died.

"Eric was a quiet, unassuming person who was fortunate enough to have a number of dynamic people around him. He was likeable but not intensely sociable. In his latter years, he had taken a great interest in his garden at the family home, Hawkwood Court, which his father had built and which he shared with his sister until she passed away six years ago.

"My main memory of Eric is of a quiet, gentle man," said the current md of Plaxton, Neil Beresford. "My impression of him is that he lived in his father's shadow..."

Mr Plaxton's will has gone to probate, but it is understood he has left his estate to local charities. CBW

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1989 (F) 6 speed ZF gearbox, 49 reclining seats, Sutrak air conditioning, double glazing, o/s/r floor mounted toilet, curtains, radio/PA/cassette, painted white MOT 24.01.96.

VAN HOOL T815 INTEGRAL
1991 (H) Cummins L10 290 BHP engine ZF HP 590 auto gearbox with integral retarder. Sutrak air conditioning, autolube, variable top speed limiter, road speed governor, kneel facility, ferry lift, Webasto hearing, brown moquette, 53 reclining seats and courier, Ishringhausen drivers seat, plug door, half rear emergency door, 2 roof air vents, double glazed, side blinds rear curtains, radiomobile radio/PA system MOT's January 1996 choice of 2.

BEDFORD YMP PLAXTON PARAMOUNT
1987 (D) 35 seats plus 2 tables, power door, side lockers, radio/PA/cassette exterior white/blue interior grey MOT 2.6.96.

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VOLVO B10MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE
1990 (G) ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma Retarder, autolube ferry lift, road speed governor variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, Webasto heating, plug front entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency door, centre toilet / servery, crew compartment, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, Ishringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, 49 reclining seats, brown moquette, double glazed side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio/PA system. MOT's 1 x Feb 96, 1 x Oct 96. Choice of 2.

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▼ Licensing

Gordon's Coaches gets licence back...

After change in management and maintenance staff

By Mark Williams

THE eight-vehicle licence of Gordon's Coaches, suspended indefinitely by West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh, will be reinstated when the new directors provide MoTs for some of its vehicles.

A series of prohibitons and complaints had led to the suspension (*CBW*, 28 October) but, following a change in management and maintenance staff at Gordon's — now being run by Christopher and Mary Millership — deputy traffic commissioner Roger Seymour said he was prepared to relax the suspension providing one of the problem vehicles and two about to enter the fleet were freshly MoT'd.

Two new people have been taken on in a consultancy capacity. Gerald Fisher will offer administration and Mark Stephens maintenance and the daily running of the vehicles, said Gordons' representative, Michael Carless, but it was anticipated that they'd take a financial stake in Gordon's in the future.

Chris Millership would be handling sales and marketing. Mr Carless said some of the problems had arisen because one of Gordons' contracts had been sub-contracted to Jones Travel, which had subsequently used Gordons' coaches to run them.

Under the new regime, the problem vehicles had been sold or MoT'd apart from one, which was due to go in part exchange for two replacement vehicles.

It is these three vehicles for which Mr Seymour wants to see three fresh MoTs but he said Gordons would be subject to a maintenance investigation in four months.

▼ Maintenance

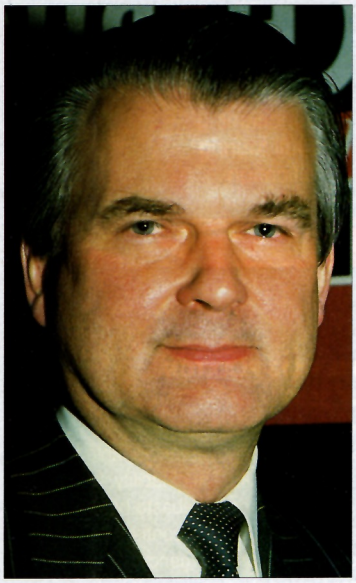
...but Eagle Line banned

ARLE Coaches of Cheltenham, trading as Eagle Line Travel, has had its O-licence revoked over maintenance failures.

In 1994 and 1995, Arle incurred six prohibitions. All had been endorsed as significant failures of maintenance. Despite having been warned by letter on 4 April there would be a further inspection, and lack of marked improvement would endanger the licence, inspectiosn in May resulted in two further prohibitions.

Transport manager Mr MD Pridgeon, accompanied by director M Davies, challenged one prohibition for a vehicle which had been recently bought, and this prohibition was discounted by the traffic commissioner.

However, he said he was not satisfied vehicles would be kept in a fit and serviceable condition and revoked the licence immediately.



Freeman: making a stand

▼ Legislation

Freeman in plea to Brussels

FORMER public transport minister Roger Freeman has made a plea with Brussels to reduce the red tape and free bus design from unnecessary regulation.

Mr Freeman, now chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, was said by national newspapers to be making a stand for the double-deck bus, but the Confederation of Passenger Transport says the real pupose of his visit is to ensure forthcoming public transport legislation is concerned only with safety issues.

"The industry and Mr Freeman are anxious to ensure Europe legislates only for the vehicle and for its safety," said David Watson, CPT's director of public affairs. He said some mainland European countries wanted wider seats and gangways, and extra doors, to reflect the way they travel. The deregulated industry, however, was capable of reacting to UK passenger demand, which is for a seat apiece.

"How we organise the 'box' inside should be our decision. Passengers abroad tend to be strap-hangers. In Britain, we prefer more seats.

"Having just been to Brussels and visited all three departments involved with passenger transport legislation, I must say I am encouraged that Europe has pre-empted the purpose of Mr Freeman's visit," said Mr Watson.

"We are glad that Mr Freeman chose to go to Brussels, since he can argue the UK industry's case from an informed base. But Brussels will not be unsympathetic to his view. All the departments I visited are saying the future is going to be less legislation, and under greater analysis... particularly fiscal evaluation."

▼ Court work

Operator supplied transport for West trial

TRANSPORT for the Rosemary West trial jury was supplied by coach operator Taylors of Sutton Scotney, Winchester, Hampshire.

Director Maxim Taylor, 24, whose father Basil is md of the 27-vehicle operation, said: "We do a lot of the court work in Winchester and three of our vehicles were involved in transporting jurors and others to the West house in Cromwell Road, Gloucester. Also, when a jury has to reach a decision, they are put up in a hotel for the night and, therefore, need transport from the court to the hotel.

"The fact that our coaches were seen on TV during the West trial coverage has resulted in us getting more corporate work."

But the operation, which celebrates its eightieth anniversary next year, has many other irons in the fire and as a result is still expanding. "Corporate work is definitely picking up now and there also seems to be a conscious move by companies to get employees to take public transport into work rather than drive the car so companies are coming to us and asking for a coach to bring their employees into work," Maxim Taylor said.

"We also do an awful lot of school contract work, excursion and tours, and trips to live shows."

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Jockeying for position as the Optimo III's greatest advocate is Coach Operator of the Year, Horseman Coaches. The thoroughbred featured in the photofinish below, joins 40 others already running in Horseman's colours. Indeed, Optimo III's have become such a safe bet that they have been voted Mini/Midicoach of the Year. And why not? Carrying 18 or 21 passengers is no handicap at all, with a 4.2 litre turbo charged engine ensuring no course should pose a problem, in wet or dry conditions. Study the athletic form below and you'll see the looks and prestige of a big coach, for around one third of the cost. Take a tip from Mr Horseman: If you'd like to get into the saddle yourself, call Steve Prime on 01737 768585, and he will tell you why Optimo III is the hot favourite.

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▼ Licensing

O-licence revoked as Tranter fails to turn up

MARK Tranter's two-vehicle minibus O-licence was revoked when he failed to appear at a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry before South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh. The commissioner also banned Mr Tranter from holding or obtaining a licence for a two years.

Mr Pugh said that in July 1993, Mr Tranter, of 14 Dan-y-Coed, Tonypandy, Mid Glamorgan, trading as M&A Taxis of Tonypandy, had been granted a variation to his licence, increasing the authorisation to two vehicles. However, his cheque for £202.50 in payment of the licence fees bounced. Mr Tranter was written to three times but did not reply.

When he was subsequently informed a disciplinary inquiry had been arranged to look into the financial position of the business, Mr Tranter said they were unaware the cheque had not been honoured and he paid the licence fees in cash.

However, said the commissioner, when he subsequently saw bank statements, it transpired Mr Tranter was overdrawn and the disciplinary proceedings were reinstated. Information was received from Mr Tranter's mother to say her son was in France and no longer required a licence.

In June, a letter was received from Mr Tranter, offering to surrender his licence. The surrender of the licence was not accepted. Mr Tranter was advised to return his licence identity disc but that had not been done.

▼ Maintenance

Authorisation cut beca run after annual test c

And O-licence duration slashed over guilty plea to seven MoT off

by Michael Jewell

TWO vehicles have been suspended from Acorn Coaches' O-licence for four months because two coaches were run after their annual test certificates had expired, and drivers' hours offences were committed. In addition, North Eastern traffic commissioner Keith Waterworth has directed the licence expire at the end of next May, some four years early.

Reginald and Joanne Hudson, trading as Acorn Coaches, of Warren Lodge, Tadcaster Road, York, North Yorkshire, appeared before the commissioner at a Leeds disciplinary inquiry. They hold an international O-licence for 10 vehicles.

It was not that the coaches were unfit, they just could not find the time to take them to the test station

The previous week Selby Magistrates ordered the partners to pay £1,030 in fines and costs after they pleaded guilty to seven offences of running untested coaches and one offence of failing to produce a tachograph record.

DoT traffic examiner Ian Tucker said information was received vehicles were possibly being used untested. The two vehicles concerned, in fact, proved to be out of test and tachograph records clearly showed their use after the expiry of the previous test certificates. When interviewed, Mr Hudson said that, due to accidents and breakdowns he could not take the vehicles off the road to test them as he did not want to let customers down. Questioned by the commissioner about convictions for exceeding the continuous driving limit at Selby in January 1993, Mr Hudson said he could not remember the circumstances. There would have been some reason, perhaps delays.

He agreed that a driver Stephenson had been convicted of exceeding the daily driving limit, taking insufficient daily rest and exceeding 4 1/2 hours driving without the required break. He said they certainly didn't schedule jobs outside the permitted hours. Mr Stephenson had been a "come a day, go a day" sort of fellow, who would drive on if he wanted to get home. Every driver had now been issued with the DoT booklet on drivers' hours.

The firm had two registered services. They had terminated a third service because of revenue and congestion problems and because they did not seem to be able to get fuel duty rebate grant for their services, despite trying very hard. They also operated school contracts for North Yorkshire plus private party work. The local services and school contracts required seven vehicles.

Asked how the offences of using untested vehicles had occurred, and whether it was a question of money, Mr Hudson said money did not come into it. Towards the end of last year they had employed a manager. The way he had gone about things had got out of hand and he had taken on work they could not cope with. It got to their busiest time of year and the two coaches were due for test. Because of the man's attitude they lost 11 staff in a short time.

That meant he and his wife were out driving and were unable to oversee what was happening. It was difficult to hire coaches at that time of the year and it would have cost more than the jobs earned. It was not that the coaches were unfit, they just could not find the days to fit in the steam cleaning and take them to the test station.

It got absolutely horrendous. At no time were the vehicles not being looked after. He was driving all day and servicing them all night. The chap concerned walked out on them and the day after a lot of the work was not done. The operation of untested vehicles was a serious matter, said the commissioner, and it must not happen again.

Mr Hudson said there was no reason why it should but the commissioner said there was no reason it should have happened in the first place. If it happened again they could be sure he would revoke their licence. It was not acceptable for professional coach and bus operators to act in that way as it presented a danger to the public.

Mr Hudson assured the commissioner the firm's buses would have their annual tests on time in the future. He said no prohibition notices had been issued to their vehicles since November 1994, and that had been put on a vehicle in the yard awaiting new springs.

Mr Waterworth said what he was concerned about were professional standards. If the partners failed to meet those standards in the future there would be a very serious outcome in relation to their future in the industry. Questioned about finance, Mr Hudson said there was a £10,000 overdraft facility available.

Mr Waterworth said he would want a letter from the bank within 28 days confirming that was still available. With 10 vehicles the partners required access to something like £20,000 to demonstrate they had sufficient capital to ensure their vehicles were kept in a fit and roadworthy condition. It was an EU requirement and they had to demonstrate it to him.

At no time were the vehicles not being looked after. He was driving all day and servicing them all night

Mr Hudson said they had voluntarily reduced their overdraft facility from £50,000. The most obvious thing to do if things got tight, and what they had done in the past, was to sell a vehicle.

The partners were very much on the borderline as far as financial acceptability was concerned, said Mr Waterworth. He would require additional information

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about finance before he found the present authorisation acceptable. Though the partners' bank account did operate in credit, it did not operate significantly in credit for any substantial period.

Mrs Hudson said they continually had £10,000 to £15,000 outstanding from customers.

Mr Hudson said North Yorkshire County Council had withheld £20,000 they had expected would be paid in September. They were told the county was now paying monthly instead of annually. That had caught them unawares. If money had been paid it would have made things look much more favourable.

The commissioner said it was clear there had been deficiencies in the way the partners had used their licence, exemplified by the convictions in respect of contraventions of the drivers' hours rules and the operation of vehicles that had not been tested. He recognised that, after past maintenance difficulties, improvements had been made and the present maintenance practice was now satisfactory. It was vitally important the partners avoided future convictions. If they were convicted repeatedly of road traffic offences, it reached the stage where he would be obliged to revoke the licence. They had not reached that point yet, but he was having no more of it.

He was not entirely satisfied the evidence demonstrated they had sufficient finance and he required additional evidence to satisfy him it was appropriate the licence continue. He required the production of evidence of an increased overdraft facility or available capital from some other source within 28 days. They had to demonstrate to him they had around £2,000 per vehicle.

Indicating he felt it was appropriate to take disciplinary action, Mr Waterworth said the partners had operated untested vehicles, which was clearly dangerous and against the law and there was no convincing excuse. There had been drivers' hours contraventions and that was a danger to public safety and was not acceptable.

▼ Licensing

Revocation and ban

FIRST Class Travel (European) Ltd's has been revoked and the company's directors, Roy Legge and David Henderson, banned from holding or obtaining an O-licence for the next 10 years. West Midland deputy traffic commissioner Roger Seymour made the orders after the company, of c/o AE Costin, Ashmore Lake Industrial Estate, Ashmore Lake Way, Willenhall, West Midlands, failed to appear at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry.

Mr Seymour said the Traffic Area had received evidence the company owed considerable amounts of money and currently writs were in existence for the non-payment of debts. The company had failed to respond to a number of letters written to it by Traffic Area staff.

▼ Maintenance

Absolute discharge over wheel-loss incident

Bailiss Coaches: 'care was beyond criticism'

AN absolute discharge was granted to Graham Treadwell after he had pleaded guilty to using a coach in a dangerous condition following a wheel loss incident.

Mr Treadwell, of The Garage, Odstone Road, Barton in the Beans, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, trading as Bailiss Coaches, admitted the offence before Leamington Spa Magistrates.

Constable Harrison, of Warwickshire Police, said he and a colleague found a stationary coach on the northbound carriageway of the A46 Warwick bypass. The rear nearside wheels had fallen off the vehicle and an examination of the wheel revealed bright metal.

The studs appeared to be in a reasonable condition but the spigots were very worn. He formed the view the vehicle had not been adequately maintained. Producing the maintenance records for the coach concerned, Mr Treadwell said he had been driving coaches for some 30 years and had been running his present business for 19 years. He had no previous convictions of any sort.

He had been driving the coach, which was returning from a trip to the Isle of Wight. Shortly before the incident the coach had passed over a large baulk of timber lying in the road. He had managed to avoid it with the front wheels, but he was unable to manoeuvre the coach to any extent as the road was busy with traffic and the rear wheel went over the timber. About five minutes later he was aware of a problem at the rear nearside and he looked for a safe place to stop. He pulled into a layby and just before the coach came to a halt the two rear nearside wheels came off.

He had carried out a visual inspection of the coach before setting off that morning. He had had no reason to be concerned about the condition of the wheels until after the impact. Mr Treadwell produced letters from a number of passengers on the coach, confirming there had been an impact.

Defending, Jonathan Lawton argued that Mr Treadwell had done everything that could be reasonably expected of him. He referred the magistrates to the High Court decision of Hart v Bex, in which it was said an absolute discharge was appropriate in cases of absolute liability, such as this, if the defendant had not been negligent and was morally blameless. Granting Mr Treadwell an absolute discharge, and making no order as to costs, the magistrates said they were satisfied the care of his coaches was beyond criticism and he had done everything that could be reasonably expected of him. CBW

▼ UK

London card white choice

OPERATORS with an eye for a bargain should pick the right card when planning a group visit to London.

The London White Card offers unlimited access to a wide range of the the capital's exhibitions and special events. The latest attraction to sign up is the new Nelson Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, making 13 venues in all. These include the Imperial War Museum, the London Transport Museum and the Natural History Museum.

The passes are available for three or seven days and a three-day card for a family of four - two adults and two children under 16 - costs £30 from 1 January. Attractive commission rates make the London White Card ideal for tour operators.

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Eye eye: Admiral Nelson looks at Lady Hamilton's London White Card, which offers unlimited access to the Nelson Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum

▼ Europe

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Thousands of bargains in Shearings'

by William Golden

SHEARINGS Holidays used the World Travel Market to unveil its Sunshine Express programme, a new 32-page brochure representing the UK's largest hotel-based Express coach programme, with 26 hotels in 10 resorts and more than 530 free joining points.

In a move away from its traditional market - the over 50s - Shearings is aiming the programme specifically at families, with thousands of free and half-price child places and the option to spend the first day of some holidays at Disneyland Paris.

The brochure is split into Spanish and Italian destinations, with specific regions including the Costa Brava, Costa Dorada, the Italian Adriatic and the Venetian and Ligurian Rivieras.

Shearings' new No Cancellation Charter, which guarantees set levels of compensation to both travel agent and customer in the event of a tour being cancelled or consolidated, is applicable.

Brian Hawe, Euro-

▼ UK

Something different on offer from Heritage

A NEW range of special themed add-ons to tailor-made group packages has been launched by Heritage Attractions.

Tour operators planning visits to one of the Heritage Attractions can now choose from themed extras such as a Viking feast, a medieval playlet, Kentish cream teas or a Summer evening special.

A visit to the Jorvik Centre in York could include a city walking tour and an authentic Viking feast, while operators going to the White Cliffs Experience, in Dover, can choose from a number of day trip itineraries.

The Oxford Story Exhibition will continue its evening private views and also offer to arrange college receptions. In addition, groups visiting in Winter will be given a complimentary glass of Oxford "Nobbler."

In Kent, the Canterbury Tales Visitor Attraction will stage evenings of medieval entertainment, which will feature actors in period dress performing playlets in the city streets.

Juliana Delaney, Heritage marketing director, said: "We recognise that a group organiser wants two things together - something different and something reliable. Our attractions have delivered excellent one-hour long experiences of quality; now we are in a position to offer a full evening or half-day of activities."

● For further information contact Joanna Cowan, Heritage Projects Ltd, Bowcliffe Court, Bowcliffe Hall, Bramham, West Yorkshire LS23 6LP, tel 01937 541030.

Costume drama: part of the evening of medieval entertainment available at the Canterbury Tales Visitor Attraction

▼ UK

Christmas times at MetroCentre

GROUPS visiting the MetroCentre in Gateshead this Christmas will have more time to shop this year when the shopping centre will stay open from 9am until 9pm on weekdays from Monday, 4 December.

This will give visitors an extra 29 hours for shopping in the run-up to Christmas. On Saturday and Sunday, the centre will be open from 9am to 7pm and from 11am to 5pm respectively.

▼ Europe

Sally thrives on competition

IT was all smiles down at Ramsgate as Sally Line announced an increased share of the cross-Channel market against strong competition from other short-sea ferry operators and Eurotunnel.

Figures recently released showed that, in October, Sally Line's passenger numbers on the Dunkerque route were up by 13.4 per cent compared to the same month last year, The number of cars carried was up by 23.4 per cent in the same month.

Linda McLeod, marketing director, said: "These increased carrying figures have reaffirmed to our competitors that, above all else, the customer is looking for increased value and high standards of service - priorities we have always striven to maintain in our crossings.

"Our main ferry competitors - Stena, P&O and Hoverspeed - have all shown substantially-reduced October carrying figures compared to last year. They are under extreme pressure in what has become a very competitive market place."

Sunshine for families

dedicated brochure

pean product director, said: "We always have had Sunshine Express holidays as part of the overall European programme but, until now, their availability has not been so prominent.

"With the recent departure of Airtours from the market, we decided that the time was right to introduce a dedicated brochure."

The lead-in price is £147 for a 10-day holiday to the Costa Brava and group discounts are available all season, starting at one free place for every 15 paying customers.

Sunshine programme: Brian Hawe (right), Shearings Holidays' European product director, and Joan Cogul, md of the Catalonia Tourist Board, at the launch of the new Sunshine Express brochure

▼ Europe

Passport changes

THE run-up to Christmas will mean an increase in cross-Channel shopping trips so operators should be advised to warn groups about travelling with the proper documents.

The British Visitor Passport is no longer valid from 31 December so all travellers should be in possession of a full 10-year passport for travel before that date as some countries - Belgium, for example - are already showing a marked reluctance to recognise the BVP now - Spain stopped recognising it at the beginning of October.

There had been a suggestion from North Sea Ferries, the Hull-based operator, that the Government should explore the possibility of introducing special identity cards for short-stay visitors. However, this came to no avail.

Full 10-year passports cost £18 and application forms are available from post offices and travel agents. Groups not planning to travel until the peak holiday season should be advised to apply well in advance, preferably six to eight weeks before departure. CBW

▼ Europe

Pick 'n' Mix a day out at Wilton House

TAKE your pick from a new range of inclusive day out options on offer from Wilton House, the stately home near Salisbury.

In addition to a visit to Wilton House, which has been the family home of the Earls of Pembroke for 450 years, group organisers may visit the Wilton Carpet Factory, go on a walking tour of the historic borough of Wilton, or visit the parish church and Wilton House garden centre.

Alun Williams, tourism and marketing manager, said: "Many of our coach operators and group travel organisers are looking for something new that is interesting and has wide appeal. By using the 1996 Pick 'n' Mix selection, they can put together their own, unique day out and simply pay one price on arrival at Wilton House."

The 1996 group visits leaflet provides information on rates and suggested visit times, plus sample party menus.

In addition, the Riverside coffee shop at the Wilton House garden centre is being promoted as a refreshment or meal stop for coaches travelling through Salisbury. There is no admission charge and free coach parking.

● For more details about visits to Wilton House and the 1996 programme of special events, contact Mr Williams on 01722 743115.

Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Athens	7C/45F	Madrid	14C/57F
Amsterdam	7C/45F	Oslo	4C/39F
Berlin	-1C/30F	Paris	10C/50F
Brussels	9C/48F	Rome	12C/54F
Dublin	8C/46F	Stockholm	0C/32F
Lisbon	17C/63F	Vienna	1C/34F
Luxembourg	4C/39F	Zurich	0C/32F

DIESEL PRICES

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.58	Netherlands	0.54
Belgium	0.54	Norway	0.70
Eire	0.53	Poland	0.23
France	0.50	Portugal	0.45
Germany	0.51	Spain	0.45
Italy	0.54	Sweden	0.64
Luxembourg	0.45	Switzerland	0.65

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	14.85 Sch/£	Italy	2,430 Lire/£
Belgium	43.60 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.39 Gld/£
Denmark	8.30 K/£	Norway	9.44 NKr/£
Eire	0.95 Punt/£	Portugal	223 Es/£
France	7.30 Fr/£	Spain	182 Pta/£
Germany	2.13 DM/£	Sweden	10.01 SKr/£
Greece	358 D/£	Switzerland	1.71 SFr/£

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Today, with the advent of the De-NOx Air/Steam Inspirator, it's possible to reduce your fleet running costs *and* help improve the environment – good news for you, your customer *and* the wider community.

Introducing De-NOx . . .

De-NOx is a new device, developed and tested over the last six years by KHM of Doncaster in conjunction with Leeds University Fuel and Energy Department. It has also undergone extensive testing by a number of leading fleet operators, organisations like yours.

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Above all De-NOx meets Euro II and Euro III standards NOW!

Just add steam!

De-NOx works by inhaling steam process, so operating and maintenance couldn't be simpler – you just fill the reservoir with water and the unit does the rest.

It's healthy too!

When vehicle pollutants are being linked to the increased incidence of such health problems as childhood asthma, the arrival of De-NOx is well timed. By installing it on your fleet vehicles, you know that while your organisation is reducing its operating costs, it is also contributing to improved air quality and, in turn, the health of this and future generations.

Is there a price to pay?

Fortunately, you don't really have to make a choice, because unlike other environmentally beneficial products, De-NOx will actually *save* you money, so that it really does pay you to be green. With fuel savings and an increased operating life for each vehicle of up to one year. De-NOx will pay for itself in nine months – even sooner when you consider that operators who install the device will avoid paying the huge fines proposed for excessive exhaust emissions.

Benefits . . .

- Hydrocarbons reduced by a massive 39%.
- NOx emissions reduced by over 19%.
- At least 5% fuel savings for both naturally asperated diesels and turbo diesel intercoolers.
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In fact, fitted to a vehicle which covers a total of 91,000 miles a year at our improved 7.02 mpg rate, De-NOx would save nearly £1,000 – or £50,000 for a fleet of 50 vehicles.

Other coach companies currently having great success operating our 'De-NOx' device are: Chaseside Coaches – Wilfreda Travel – Birmingham Coach Co – to name a few.

Also: Advanced negotiations are in progress – after successful trials with National Bus Coach Companies such as StageCoach – for substantial fleet orders.

Should you require ANY further information contact:

B. J. CANNON – Project Manager, ECO Coach & Bus Co,
Unit 12, Bootham Lane Industrial Estate,
Dunscroft, Doncaster DN7 4JU
Tel: 01302 842714 Fax: 01302 842743

ECO; Coach and Bus Company are the sole distributor of the De-NOx Inspirator for buses and coaches in the UK.

Questions & Answers

Q From time to time drivers, who are contracted to give a week's notice, have left summarily, in one case half way through a duty! Do we have any right of redress or compensation through final wages or otherwise for the losses we suffer on such occasions?

DM, Derbyshire

A If an employee leaves without giving the notice contractually required he is unquestionably in breach of contract. In theory you could sue to recover your losses - whether this was lost revenue, or paying others overtime to cover the work, or even the cost of employing an agency driver for the unexpired notice period. There are, however, two practical problems in this. Firstly you need to be in a position to quantify the loss: you would need to sue for a specific amount and might well have to justify that you had really and necessarily incurred this extra cost as a result of the employee leaving.

This may prove difficult. Even if you can cross that bridge and get a judgment in your favour, the second obstacle might be even harder: enforcing the payment from the ex-driver concerned. If, as is likely, the individual was unable to pay a lump sum, the best you might hope for is to secure an attachment to wages order. This would require his current employer to make deductions from wages and pay them to you. As you might imagine, it is rare that employers seek to recover damages for breach of contract in this way.

Beware, however, of making deductions from final wages (whether for the current pay period or from a 'week in hand').

It can be done, indeed, keeping a week's wages in hand may itself deter employees from quitting without serving out their notice period. The important point to remember is that, under the Wages Act 1986, deductions can only be made from wages:

(a) If they are permitted by statute or on the order of a court or tribunal;
(b) To correct overpayment;
(c) To a third person (eg a trades union) if consented to by the employee;
(d) Where the employee has been on strike; or
(e) Where the employee has previously given written permission for the deduction to be made, or provision for the deduction is made in the contract of employment.

My advice, therefore, is that you should include a clause in your written statements of employment to the effect that any unpaid wages - including holiday pay entitlement - are liable to be forfeited if due notice is not given.

You might also wish to include in this clause that any monies due to you (eg fare box revenue or any loan or advance), uniforms, keys and documentation (eg tachograph discs) and any other company items or equipment in the person's possession, must be handed in to avoid forfeiture of wages due. I intentionally used the words "liable to forfeiture" rather than "will" as it leaves you with discretion in how to apply it. It might be seen as very heavy handed if you withheld the best part of two weeks wages where the period of notice was just a few hours short of what it should have been.

Q I drive on airport internal transfer work, wholly on private roads, using vehicles which are legally used with red (duty free) diesel. But they do carry O-licence discs and are subject to police enforcement of traffic law and checks by the Vehicle Inspectorate. The majority of the vehicles do not have tachographs. Which driving hours rules, if any, do I have to observe?

(Name and address supplied).

A The UK Government has been given authority by the EC to specifically exempt vehicles used exclusively within airports from the EC hours rules. However, the Government has not made the requisite regulations to bring this into force. That is, however, a little academic because it must surely be the case that all airport work falls within the definition of regular or special regular, with a route length of a lot less than 50km and is, therefore, out of scope to the EC rules on that count.

The domestic driving hours rules are contained in the Transport Act 1968 (as amended) and they apply to 'the carriage of passengers or goods by 'road'. 'Road' has a legal meaning far wider than only highways to which the public has access. There are many instances where the courts have found private property (eg pub car parks and shop forecourts) to be 'roads' for the purposes of road traffic law. Homing in on your particular application, in DPP v Coulman [1993] it was held the 'Customs side' of a dock area was a road and in DPP v Cargo Handling Ltd [1992] it was similarly held in relation to airports.

So I believe that, although you do not need to use a tachograph, or work within the limits of EC hours, the domestic rules do apply to the work you undertake. As well as being what the law appears to require, it also seems logical that the safety-based domestic hours rules should apply to the carriage of passengers, wherever they happen to be carried.

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 62656 Marksman will answer more questions on 16 December

Q Is it in order for passengers to help themselves to hot drinks from an on-board machine? On our own programme of excursions and tours we provide a stewardess service. On private hires we do not permit passengers to use the drinks facilities, but this leads to friction and confusion as other operators clearly allow this. Who would be liable if a passenger upsets very hot liquid on another passenger, or themselves?

VB, West Sussex.

A While your concern is understandable, the problem appears to be more apparent than real. I have never heard of such an accident actually happening and, as far as I am aware, there are no legislation, rules, or even guidelines on this matter.

As in all health and safety matters, your duty is to assess the risk and take appropriate steps to minimise it. When hot drinks are being carried on a moving coach, whether by your staff or passengers, accident risk will be reduced if (as on trains) the containers have lids on them and, perhaps, if only adults are allowed to carry drinks around. Other than either limiting the number of cups that will be carried at any one time, or providing a suitable 'tray' (ie one with compartments into which cups fit), there seems to be little more you could reasonably do, short of banning use by passengers.

This seems a bit pointless, for your own staff do not have any special powers which will make them less likely to have an accident than a passenger. Remember that, in any claim for damages, the claimant would have to prove that you, or your employee, or another passenger (as appropriate) had actually been negligent. This will be hard to do if it can be shown that you have taken all reasonable steps to minimise risks. The happening of the unforeseen cannot, in itself, be construed as negligence. CBW

Kart blanche: the winners and sponsors

Horses and karts...

IT just goes to show, although we're not quite sure what. But despite the presence of some of the coach and bus industry's most competitive players, the industry's grand prix was won by... a seventeen-year-old lad, albeit the son of Keith Horseman of Horseman Coaches, the 90-odd vehicle Reading-based operation.

In fact, James only passed his test last August, but we're happy to report he did not achieve the fastest lap.

This went to someone considerably older, Lyle McMorland, sales rep with Distinctive Systems, although we won't reveal just how old (thanks for the computer, Lyle). The go-karting event, held at Milton Keynes' Magna Karta Indoor Karting Centre and sponsored by Chapman Stevens Insurance Brokers, Distinctive Systems and Allen & Douglas, has now become a firm fixture in the coach and bus calendar.

Best team prize went to Pegasus which was, you've guessed it, the Horseman team.

And if we told you best lady driver was Allen & Douglas sales exec Carol Shepherd it's just possible we'd start to hear cries of "fix", but we can confirm Carol was an extremely good driver... unlike the *Coach and Bus Week* team members.

Visit was Stranger than fiction

KEN Stranger of LAG Motorcoach USA visited Coach & Bus 95 at the NEC recently and decided to take in the adjoining British Ski Show next door. After scanning the complementary issue of the *Daily Mail Promotional Supplement* Mr Stranger says he was horrified to see that Le Shuttle was actually sponsoring skiing in America. "Am I missing something here?" he asks. "Is there a sharp right-hand turn beneath the Channel of which I knew nothing? Or could it be that the Brainstrust which actually turned a viable road tunnel under the Channel into a monumental White Elephant by converting it to rail is now working for the Chunnel marketing department?"

CBW

In the passenger seat

RED-FACED seatbelt company director David Howell Davies will be clunking and clicking in the passenger seat for the next five years, having fallen foul of the drink-drive laws. The director of Retro-Fit Safety Systems was told by Pontypool magistrates they'd considered jailing him but they gave him probation and 100 hours' community service instead because he is hoping to employ a further 14 people at the firm.

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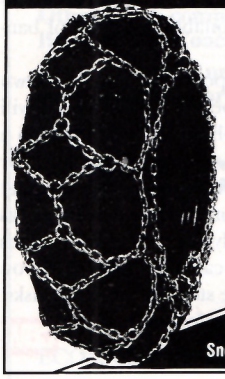
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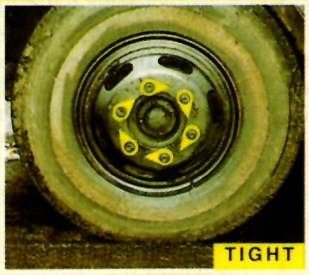

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

We'll consider applications for grants from all rural England

From Richard Tulloch

I am most grateful to 'Marksman' for referring to the Rural Development Commission's ability to provide grants advice in certain circumstances. Perhaps it is worth stressing that we can consider applications for grant aid from all of rural England; that includes services which genuinely serve rural areas, but which begin/or end in larger towns or cities. What we cannot do is consider requests relating to services exclusively in a part of the UK other than England.

It would be inappropriate to spell out here the full details of eligibility and other RTDF criteria. Suffice it to say that any readers who would like us to consider their proposal should contact their area office of the RDC at an early stage in the development of their idea; if in doubt about where the nearest office is, readers are welcome to phone my branch on 01722 336255.

Marksman also usefully alludes to our business advisory service which, of course, relates to all sorts of business, not just those involved in public transport. This is a more targeted service, being available in our priority areas, called Rural Development Areas. There are other criteria too; for example, it concentrates on small businesses employing at least five people. As with the RTDF, readers should contact their area office for advice on this service.

In conclusion, I would remind readers the recently-published Rural White Paper is arguably at its most positive when considering rural transport. In the summary, the Government states it will "make the RTDF, which supports community transport initiatives, more flexible and give it priority in future allocations of resources."

Richard Tulloch
Rural Development Commission
Salisbury
Wilts

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Response Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 62656

The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your full name (ie first name and surname) and address for our informaion.

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

Congrats on seminar

From Peter Everard

I should like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and to compliment you and your organisation on the Coaching for Profit seminar. The quality and content presented was excellent and I am convinced that the industry needs this type of forum. I do hope that momentum can be maintained and that more operators are willing to share their experiences.

On behalf of Clarkes of London, the directors sincerely apologise for their failure to attend, but they have committed to attend future seminars and they have expressed their willingness to contribute by giving their story.

With the support from all at Clarkes and myself, well done and please keep it up.

Peter Everard
Consultant to Clarkes of London
Lower Sydenham
London SE26

Information wanted

From Mark Child

The Aldbourne, Wiltshire family of Barnes Coaches is celebrating its 75th anniversary. I am writing the 'official' history of the business and wonder whether any readers have information relating to this firm they would be willing to pass on to me. I am interested in details of the vehicles owned by Barnes Coaches from the 1920s, information about the firm's owners and employees, or any relevant personal anecdotes or experiences readers may have. I would also like to hear from anyone who has photographs of Barnes' coaches. Anyone able to help can write to me at 10 Bindon Close, Grange Park, Swindon SN5 6JH, Wiltshire.

Mark Child
Grange Park
Swindon
Wiltshire

Oldest bus in service?

From Roy Gould

I believe we that we at Nostalgiabus have the oldest bus in regular daily service. Our ex London Transport RF136, an AEC Regal IV with Metro - Cammell 39-seat bodywork goes out daily on Surrey County Council school route 808 from Stoneleigh to Cheam as well as doing school contracts and private hire during the day. It has also performed remarkable service on Surrey Council Leisure routes for the last couple of Summers. It is unique as it was the prototype RF, modernised by London Transport in the mid 1970s with twin headlights, refurbished seating and interior, and redesigned windscreen and body styling. It certainly paid dividends!

Since re-entering service in 1989, it has only failed three times, once with a starter problem, once with a seized piston, and this year a stuck ball valve in the pump. We have recently had new seats fitted, with the original pattern moquette made by Holdsworth. Its original engine is currently being rebuilt and should be back in a couple of weeks.

Top speed is 48mph, and it gives a steady 11mpg on local work. It certainly doesn't seem to show its age as the front end design has been copied by the Wright-bodied Dennis Darts.

We also operate two Routemasters, a 1954 Guy Special and a 1977 Reliance. We have two more RFs to be restored but with one-and-a-half deck 37-seat Park Royal bodywork ex British European Airways, and an RT. Our office is a G-reg Red Arrow AEC Merlin!

On a different note, despite having no seatbelts in any of our fleet, our school work has increased threefold this year ; private hire tourist work is up about fourfold, though we have lost out on the longer distance work we used to do. For us, there's more profit in a couple of half-day London sightseeing tours with a Routemaster than thrashing up the motorway to Alton Towers for the same price!

All the best to all the others keeping our coach and bus heritage alive and running.

Roy Gould
Director
Nostalgiabus
London N1

Thanks for the model

From Peter Shipp

Many thanks for the, Corgi *Letter of the Week* model, received today — I must admit that I had not written the letter with any anticipation of such success! (*CBW*, 18 November). Amazingly it is one that I do not already have in my collection — my office fleet is now over 350. Perhaps it might be worth a feature one day!

Peter Shipp
Joint managing director
EYMS Group
Hull

COACH AND BUS WEEK
COACH INDUSTRY AWARDS
1995
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

Simply the best!

Over 600 guests shared *CBW's* celebration of excellence at The Metropole Hotel, NEC last Saturday. Mike Morgan reports on a night to remember

CLARKES of London had the industry on its feet in spontaneous applause as its name rang out around the banqueting suite as winner of the highly-coveted Coach Operator of the Year (large fleet).

But before Bill and Tania Clarke had time to regain their seat the level of excitement reached new heights - Clarkes was acclaimed as Overall Coach Operator of the Year. It had won the coach industry's top award, confirming that, for 1995, Clarkes is 'simply the best', as its own moto claims.

Overwhelmed with the pride which has driven Clarkes to number one in the coach league, Bill Clarke still hadn't come down to earth on Monday morning.

Nevertheless, the company had been quick to grasp the marketing opportunities which victory presents. Its PR machine is already in gear to ensure that 'Coach Operator of the Year' becomes a key part of publicity across the company. Awards logos will soon be in place. Mr Clarke said: "It's made me feel that it's all worth while.

"The Coach Industry Awards are what the industry needed 10 years ago. For those of us who are doing it right it's the chance to prove our worth." However, Mr Clarke was quick to appreciate that next time round it will be even tougher. He said: "We've got competition on our heels for next year."

Victory kiss: Bill and Tania Clarke celebrate

A coach family affair: Coach Operator of the Year (small fleet) goes to Paul S Winson

Heading for an award: Ken Flight steps forward to take medium fleet trophy

Everyone a winner

ALTHOUGH at the end of the evening the spotlight fell on Clarkes as Overall Coach Operator of the Year, each of the 21 winners at this year's Awards can justifiably claim their share of the limelight as number one in their category.

On the operator side it is fitting that the two other coach operator categories also went to family-run companies. Paul Winson collected the award for Coach Operator of the Year (small fleet) but the scream of delight which greeted the announcement confirmed that the award is shared with his wife Margaret and their two sons.

Flights of Birmingham is Coach Operator of the Year (medium fleet). Bigger, longer-established and with a higher profile through its Flightlink service it remains a family concern headed by Ken Flight and ably steered by his son Geoff.

CBW

Monkhouse: top performer, top event

Night of the stars

COACH AND BUS WEEK
COACH INDUSTRY AWARDS 1995
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

There were winners but no losers at this year's awards and the quality of entertainment was a match for the occasion

THE 1995 Coach Industry Awards was more than a night out. It was a complete experience, starting with an optional coach trip on Saturday morning and ending sometime on Sunday when guests dragged themselves away from the hotel.

Our tour of the Black Country, courtesy of the Heart of England tourist board and Johnsons Coach Travel of Henley-in-Arden, had a healthy load of operators keen to learn more about the tourist opportunities in the area.

Later arrivals had to suffer the frustrations of a failed computerised reservation system but this did not detract from what was to follow. A gala night to remember with a full house where the guest list read like a who's who of the coach industry.

The winners were the stars but it was the coach tourism industry as a whole which was the victor.

Party mood: celebrations went on all night long

After the drinks reception Gavin Campbell of *That's Life* took the stage and fronted the presentation of the awards with *CBW* editor Mike Morgan, ably assisted by the lovely Michelle Egginton. As last year it was a night of quality.

The meal was half way through the presentations and, after a short break for photographs, it was time for cabaret.

When celebrating the top achievers it is only right to use the best in entertainment. And it was the king of TV comedy, Bob Monkhouse, who put the icing on a night of high-level entertainment.

It was a sparkling performance matched only by the quality of the industry being celebrated. CBW

Coach Industry Awards 1995 — the winners

Category	Winner	Sponsor
1. Coach Operator of the Year (1-15 vehicles)	Paul S Winson of Loughborough	Bova UK
2. Coach Operator of the Year (16-39 vehicles)	Flights Coach Travel of Birmingham	Plaxton Coach & Bus
3. Coach Operator of the Year (40 plus vehicles)	Clarkes of London	Jonckheere
4. Overall Coach Operator of the Year	Clarkes of London	Stena Line
5. Coach Driver of the Year	John Sleightholme of Eddie Brown Tours, Helperby	Disneyland Paris
6. Coach Manager of the Year	Graham Simpkins of Lowland Coaches, Galashiels	Volvo
7. Engineer of the Year	Eric Stockwell of Wallace Arnold, Leeds	
8. Coach of the Year (40 plus seats)	Plaxton Excalibur/Volvo B10M GL	
9. Midicoach of the Year	Autobus Classique Nouvelle/Mercedes-Benz 814D	
10. CTC Special Award	Brian Crowther of Black Prince, Leeds	
11. Best Group Attraction	Granada Studio Tours	
12. Best Group Accommodation	Holiday Club Pontins	Greatdays
13. Cross Sea Carrier of the Year	North Sea Ferries	Albatross Travel Services
14. Coach Tour Wholesaler of the Year	Independent Coach Travel	
15. Operator Training Award	Lucketts of Fareham	Bus & Coach Training.
16. Customer Service Award	Autoglass Coach and Bus Services	Yeates Bus & Coach
17. Best Tour Programme by a Coach Operator	Wallace Arnold of Leeds	Chapman Stevens
18. Best Operator Brochure	Parrys International of Cheslyn Hay	
19. Best Fleet Livery	Harry Shaw Travel	
20. Dealership of the Year	Kirkby Coach & Bus	
21. Innovation Award	Siesta International Club Class	Autoglass Coach & Bus Services.
22. Best Marketing Campaign	Clapton Coaches of Midsomer Norton	

For pictures of all the winners: turn to pages 26 & 27. Match the picture number with that in the list above

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SALVADOR CAETANO

MAN/Algarve II joins Supreme Malta fleet

THIS new MAN 11.190/Algarve II joins the Maltese fleet of Supreme Travel, Zejtun.

It is the second such vehicle to be supplied by Salvador Caetano (UK) to this operator, the first having been collected just a month previously.

Mounted on MAN 11.190 rear-engined underframe, the coachwork specification includes: 31 reclining passenger seats; courier seat; double-glazing with full-draw curtains, plug door and full-height rear Continental door.

Seen prior to departure with his new coach is Joseph Abela of Supreme.

PLAXTON

Pointer Darts symbolise Epsom Buses' strategy

EPSOM Buses, the bus-operating arm of Epsom Coaches, has added two new Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Darts to its fleet.

Andrew Richmond, Epsom Coaches managing director, said: "We see continuing investment in new buses as essential in maintaining a reliable, attractive, high-quality operation. Most of our bus operations are commercial and it is important to us that we operate them with buses which will appeal to existing and potential customers."

Although 1995 marks the 75th anniversary of Epsom Coaches, the company's bus operations started in 1986 with local routes in Epsom and through services to Kingston and Croydon.

"We are very pleased with the Plaxton/Dennis combination," said Mr Richmond. "As well as running five Pointers, we have nine Premieres on Javelin chassis in operation and five due for next season."

ALEXANDER

Timeline's low-f Volvo Ultras a

Six new vehicles t Greater Manch

by Mike Morgan

FURTHER mainstream buses in Greater Manchester to be accessible to wheelchairs, prams and people with walking difficulties are to operate with Timeline between Bolton, Harwood and Bury.

Timeline's six new low-floor vehicles are the first production Volvo Ultras to go into service outside Northern Ireland. Partly funded by £25,000 per vehicle grant from Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority, with money allocated by its executive (GMPTE), the Alexander-bodied Ultras are on Volvo B10L chassis. Bodywork uses the all-aluminium Säffle 2000 system and the chassis allows stepless centre gangway over the rear axle.

Other operators to benefit from the scheme, which funds the difference between low-floor and conventional buses, are: Starline, Stagecoach Ribble, GMB North and Bullocks (*CBW*, 25 November). Timeline is the first to put the vehicles on to dedicated low-floor routes.

Ian Longworth, managing director of Timeline, said: "We at Timeline are pleased to be able to work in partnership with the authority to bring these new access buses to our passengers in Bury and Bolton.

loor first'

operate in ster area

"We are sure many of them will be quick to see the benefits these vehicles bring."

The Ultras have been purchased to replace conventional single-deckers on selected commercial services (508 - Bolton, Affetside, Bury; 545 - Bolton, Tonge Moor, Harwood; 560 - Bolton, Harwood Bury) and meet the GMPTE specification to allow them to be used on tendered services in the evenings and Sundays.

Double-glazing, Bright-Tech destination equipment and Purmo convector heating are part of the Ultra's high specification. The Euro 2 engine-equipped B10L has kneeling suspension taking the entrance step down to 240mm and detachable ramps provide wheelchair access when required.

"Our decision to buy Alexander Ultras for this operation was prompted by a number of factors," said Mr Longworth. "One was that it's not a conversion of an existing chassis but a purpose-built pan-European product designed from the start as an accessible bus.

"We also have a good working relationship with Alexander and Volvo - who, between them, have supplied most of the vehicles in our fleet - and a high level of confidence in their design capability."

The six Ultras are the latest purchases in continuing replacement programme which has seen Alexander supply 40 buses to Timeline in the last 18 months.

KIRKBY

Thirlwell's plumps for second Plaxton Javelin

A PLAXTON-bodied Dennis Javelin supplied by Kirkby Coach & Bus to Thirlwell's Tours of Swalwell, Tyne and Wear, at the start of the year has performed so well that Thirlwell's has ordered a second.

"We've been delighted with the coach," said John Thirlwell. "We have customers requesting it, and it has performed beautifully during what has been a very busy season for us."

The 53-seater is used on the company's own holiday tour programme which takes it all over the British Isles. It also runs further afield, on private hires to mainland Europe. Mr Thirlwell added: "It's clocked up 22,500 miles in under 10 months and it's proved to be particularly economical, returning around 13-14 mpg on touring."

Thirlwell's is celebrating 78 years in business, having been started by Mr Thirlwell's grandfather in 1917.

The company has eight coaches and is now run by John, his sister Sue and brother Ian. CBW

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R 1977 BEDFORD 500
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Tel Adrian or Michael on 01249 740444
(J17 M4) (60125/BE)

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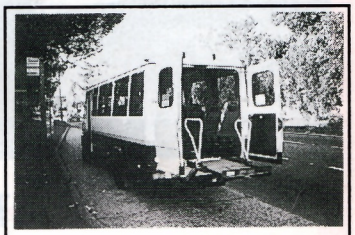

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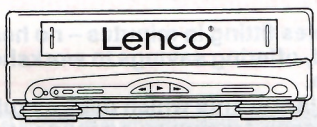

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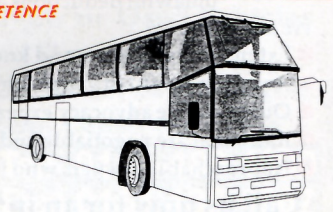
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01733 467147 Appointments & Tenders

GROUP BODY SUPERVISOR

COMPETITIVE SALARY & BENEFITS PACKAGE

VACANCY

East Yorkshire Motor Services Limited, a subsidiary of EYMS Group, is the leading bus and coach company in North Humberside and the Scarborough area.

Due to a forthcoming retirement the company has a vacancy for a Body Supervisor within its engineering department. Located within Anlaby Road in Hull, the Supervisor will assume responsibility for the efficient and cost-effective control and development of:

- Preventative body overhauls
- Major accident repairs
- Vehicle body inspections
- Paint Shop production
- Trim Shop production

Reporting to the Area Engineer - West, the successful applicant will need to demonstrate a high degree of self-motivation and commitment to quality improvement and cost control in an increasingly competitive environment.

Salary will be commensurate with experience but will not be less than £14,500 per annum. Benefits will include contributory pension scheme and sick-pay scheme.

Applicants should provide a full CV, including details of present position and salary, and this should be sent under 'Personal' cover, to arrive by 9 December 1995 to:

Gordon Jones,
Chief Engineer,
East Yorkshire Motor Services Limited,
252 Anlaby Road,
Hull HU3 2RS.

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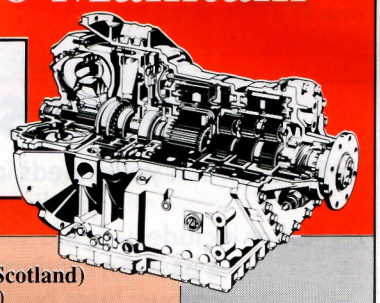

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NORTH WEST - Driveline Specialists Ltd
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SOUTH EAST (North) - Talbot Diesels Ltd
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APPOINTMENTS & TENDERS GENERAL ENQUIRIES – Julia Hinkins – **01733 467144**

CLASSIFIED ADVERT PRODUCTION – Suzanne Porter – **01733 467124**

Please use these numbers immediately

01733 467147 Appointments & Tenders

London Transport bus services

London Transport Buses will shortly be inviting tenders for the operation of the following London Transport bus routes.

79	Edgware - Alperton
179	Barking - Chingford
190	Richmond - West Brompton
261	Lewisham - Bromley Common
391	Richmond - Fulham
645	Goodmayes - Chingford
H25	Hatton Cross - Hanworth
H26	Feltham - Hatton Cross

If you are interested and have already submitted your pre-qualification documents then you need take no further action at this stage. However if you are interested and have not completed London Transport's pre-qualification system for bus service tendering then you must do so by 15th December 1995 in order to receive invitations to tender for the above routes.

Pre-qualification documents are available by writing to:

Mr T Wynne
Buyer
London Transport Buses
172 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 9TN

London Transport Buses

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(60277/APP)

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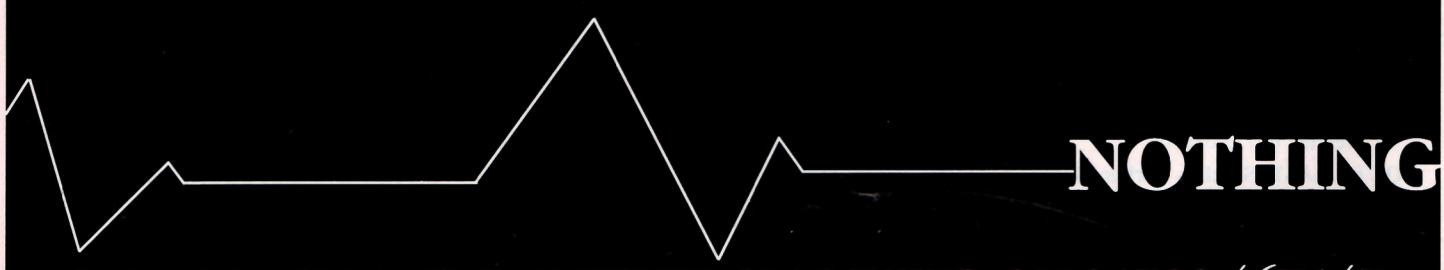

NOTHING

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▼ Bus

Hotelink post

HOTELINK, the personalised door-to-door minibus shuttle service between London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports and central London's hotels, has appointed Paul Brittain sales and marketing manager. Tony Robinson has been promoted from this position to customer services director, where he takes over responsibility of product development.

▼ Coach

Rank position

INDUSTRY outsider Andrew Teare is the new chief executive of the Rank Organisation, parent company of tour giant Shearings, from 1 January, 1996. Rank is also opening a new CenterParcs style operation called Oasis.

▼ Bus

Success spreads to small screen

Md of Bayline in training video

by Frank Forster

BAYLINE md Mike Palmer could soon be seen on screens across the UK and Europe talking about successful management and the importance of 'green' initiatives.

Mr Palmer, whose company is based in Torquay, Devon, was chosen as an example of a successful manager to be the central part of a new management training approach, including a video — *The Good Manager.*

The project has attracted European funding and is a result of a partnership involving Bayline, Devon County Council, which secured the European funding, the Centre for Management Studies at Exeter University, and Trademouse consultancy in South Devon.

Mr Palmer said the invite to take part in the project was a tribute to the work of the entire company: "We have around 250 drivers who are face to face with the public every day and it is important to get it right...We have upgraded much of our fleet with newer, more spacious and greener buses, attaining BS5750 plus the Green Tourism award. CBW

Bayline md Mike Palmer shows how it's done

CBW Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

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Coach and Bus Week is the news weekly for coach and bus operators. *Transit* provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: *Transit* is not available on subscription without *Coach and Bus Week.*

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Airmail	1 year's subscription	£147

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

Owner/Director ☐ 01
Senior/General Manager ☐ 02
Engineering/Service Manager ☐ 03
Other, (please specify) ☐ 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ☐ 01
Coach Operator ☐ 05
Coach & Bus Operator ☐ 02
Local Government ☐ 03
Other (please specify) ☐ 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	☐ 01	☐ 10
6-10	☐ 02	☐ 11
11-15	☐ 03	☐ 12
16-25	☐ 04	☐ 13
26-39	☐ 05	☐ 14
40-100	☐ 06	☐ 15
101-400	☐ 07	☐ 16
401-1000	☐ 08	☐ 17
1000 +	☐ 09	☐ 18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	☐ 01	☐ 12	☐ 23
Parts/Spares	☐ 02	☐ 13	☐ 24
Oil/Fuel	☐ 03	☐ 14	☐ 25
Breakdown	☐ 04	☐ 15	☐ 26
Insurance/Finance	☐ 05	☐ 16	☐ 27
Fuel Cards	☐ 06	☐ 17	☐ 28
Training	☐ 07	☐ 18	☐ 29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	☐ 08	☐ 19	☐ 30
Ferry Crossing	☐ 09	☐ 20	☐ 31
Hotel Bookings	☐ 10	☐ 21	☐ 32
Theatre Tickets	☐ 11	☐ 22	☐ 33
Other, (please specify)			☐ 34

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

Private Hire ☐ 01
Day Excursions ☐ 02
British Tours ☐ 03
European Tours ☐ 04
Local Government Contracts ☐ 05
Emergency/Breakdown Services ☐ 06

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